

Montana Sportsmen ALLIANCE

Voice of Reason on Montana Fish and Wildlife Issues

TO THE SENATE FWP COMMITTEE:

RE: SB 197 – An act creating an apprentice hunting certificate for persons who have not completed a hunter safety and education course.

POSITION: Montana Sportsmen Alliance hereby goes on record **STRONGLY OPPOSING** this bill based on the following reasons:

- * Youth recruitment is an important endeavor, but safety is of primary consideration. 5-6 year olds are not capable of safely handling heavy weapons during Montana style hunting.
- * There are no assurances that mentors are actually certified and capable of supervising apprentice activity in a safe, ethical and knowledgeable manner.
- * Disregards and marginalizes Montanan's long-standing and highly respected Hunter Safety training program. What do these instructors and Game Wardens think about this?
- * There is no evidence long term involvement in ethical hunting will result. Several youth incentives are in place now. Increased access and opportunity is more beneficial.
- * Nothing is taught or nurtured other than shooting at some animal. This is not what a true apprenticeship training program is designed to do.

Again, we most strongly state our **OPPOSITION** to SB 197.

Thank you for your time and consideration. Montana Sportsmen Alliance Leadership Group.

Vito Quatraro – Bozeman	580-1130
Joe Perry – Brady	627-2369
John Borgreen – Great Falls	453-4273
Sam Milodragovich – Butte	490-2224
Robert Wood – Hamilton	531-5043
JW Westman – Laurel	633-2415

www.montanasportsmenalliance.com

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P.O. Box 1324 | Hamilton, Montana 59840